THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" (a) A petition, dated 28th August 1952 was received on the subject from the Harijans, etc., of the village.

" (b) Attention is invited to the answer to clause (b) of Legislative Assembly Question No. 344 (194) (Starred) by Sri M. Veerabhadram, M.L.A."

SRI K. GOVINDA RAO :—" Were specific instructions to the Collector of Visakhapatnam issued by the Government that the banjar lands should be assigned only to the landless poor and not to the political sufferer? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" The hon. Member's conscience will be satisfied if I say that the application by the political sufferer had been rejected."

Questions 346 to 348.

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Sir, questions Nos. 346, 347 and 348 all relate to the same subject. I shall give the answers together for all these questions."

MR. SPEAKER :—" They will all be taken up together. Mr. Gopalakrishnan's question will be taken up first."

Price of rice in Malabar.

* 346 Q.—SRI P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether the price of rice supplied in Malabar through ration shops has been enhanced recently and if so at what rates; and

(b) whether the Government have received any representations that the price be lowered to pre-decontrol rates and if so, the action taken thereon?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (a) Yes, there has been a slight increase. The present average retail selling prices are reported to be Rs. 22–12–6 per Imperial maund for I sort rice and Rs. 21–5–8 per maund for II sort rice.

" (b) No representation has been received except a resolution tabled by Sri T. C. Narayana Nambiar, M.L.A., recommending the reduction of the price of rice issued through ration shops in Malabar to the 1946 level.

It is not possible for the Government to reduce the price of rice in Malabar as uniform pool prices have been fixed for the State as a whole, on a ' no profit, no loss ' basis, taking into account the total quantity of rice under Government control that will be available for distribution in the current year (imported as well as locally procured) and the total cost thereof. The slight enhancement in selling price is due mainly to the increase in purchase price of rice from the several sources of supply. The Government have issued

instructions that incidental charges should be kept down at the minimum by avoiding unnecessary movements and handling."

Supply of rice in Malabar and Nilgiris.

* 347 *Q.*—SRI P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) the quota of rice allocated by the Centre for distribution in Malabar and Nilgiris where ration shops are still maintained;

(*b*) the price at which rice is so supplied by the Centre; and

(*c*) whether the Government are actually distributing the rice in Malabar at this price and if not the reason therefor?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (*a*) Two lakhs tons of rice.

" (*b*) The Government of India are supplying rice to this State from various sources such as Overseas, and other States in the Union, e.g., Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The prices of the rice supplied varies of from source to source and approximately ranges between Rs. 31 per maund for Overseas rice, Rs. 23 for Uttar Pradesh rice, Rs. 19 for Madhya Pradesh rice and Rs. 18–6–0 per maund for Orissa rice.

" (*c*) No. The Government are not distributing rice at the rates mentioned in the answer to clause (*b*) above in any part of the State including Malabar. With effect from 1st February 1953 the Government have fixed uniform pool prices for rice to the wholesalers throughout the State on a ' no loss, no profit ' basis, taking into account the total quantity of rice available for distribution in the State during this year (imported stocks as well as locally procured) and the total cost thereof. If the price of rice obtained from the Government of India alone is taken into consideration the price will be higher than the pool price now fixed."

Price of rice in Malabar.

* 348 *Q.*—SRI K. P. GOPALAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) the present rate at which rice and paddy are sold in the fair price shops in Malabar;

(*b*) whether there has been increase in that price recently; and

(*c*) if so, the reasons for the same?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (*a*) The average retail issue price of rice supplied through ration shops in Malabar is Rs. 22–12–6 per imperial maund for I sort and Rs. 21–5–8 per imperial maund for II sort. The price of paddy is not reported, as it is not supplied.